



Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Temporary President and Majority Leader  
Legislative Office Building, Room 907  
Albany, New York 12247

Dear Senator Stewart-Cousins:

We write with concern about recent reports regarding Democratic leaders supporting a ban on New York's system of fusion voting. Abolishing fusion would be a mistake for the Democratic Party and for New York's democracy as a whole.

For more than a century, the New York fusion system has allowed voters to express their values without spoiling close races. Across the country, Democratic elected leaders are championing measures that strengthen voting rights and democracy. Limiting voter choice by banning fusion would move our state in the wrong direction.

Furthermore, abolishing fusion would weaken a key ally of the Democratic coalition, the Working Families Party (WFP). The WFP played a pivotal role in securing our current Democratic majority. It has been a close partner in efforts to increase the minimum wage, achieve paid family leave, and reform the Rockefeller Drug Laws.

In many areas of the state, the presence of a WFP line has been a boon to Democratic candidates. It allows independent or disaffected voters who ordinarily would not vote on the Democratic line to cast a vote for the Democratic nominee. A fusion ban could threaten Democratic elected officials and candidates running in marginal districts, making it harder to build on our recent gains in future election cycles.

For these reasons, we join with Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, seventeen Members of Congress, and more than 340 New York elected officials in opposing any attempts to abolish New York's fusion voting system. We have attached their letters of opposition.

Instead of abolishing fusion, we should improve the current fusion voting system to sidestep logistical challenges and address the concerns of the system's critics.

However, you may feel about fusion voting, one thing we should all be able to agree on is that the debate should be untethered from state budget negotiations. The policy debate is too important to New York voters to be left to the 11th hour.

We hope you will keep these views in mind in the final weeks of the state budget process.

Sincerely,

Jessica Ramos  
Senator  
13th Senate District

Brian Benjamin  
Senator  
30th Senate District

Alessandra Biaggi  
Senator  
34th Senate District

Neil Breslin  
Senator  
44th Senate District

Andrew Gounardes  
Senator  
22nd Senate District

Peter Harckham  
Senator  
40th Senate District

Brad Hoylman  
Senator  
27th Senate District

Robert Jackson  
Senator  
31st Senate District

Liz Krueger  
Senator  
28th Senate District

John Liu  
Senator  
11th Senate District

Rachel May  
Senator  
52rd Senate District

Shelley Mayer  
Senator  
37th Senate District

Jen Metzger  
Senator  
42nd Senate District

Velmanette Montgomery  
Senator  
25th Senate District

Zellnor Myrie  
Senator  
20th Senate District

Roxanne Persaud  
Senator  
19th Senate District

Gustavo Rivera  
Senator  
33rd Senate District

Julia Salazar  
Senator  
18th Senate District

James Sanders  
Senator  
10th Senate District

Jose Serrano  
Senator  
29th Senate District

James Skoufis  
Senator  
39th Senate District

Toby Anne Stavisky  
Senator  
16th Senate District

Brian Kavanaugh  
Senator  
26th Senate District

James T. Bailey  
Senator  
26th Senate District

David Carlucci  
Senator  
28th Senate District

Timothy Kennedy  
Senator  
63rd Senate District